The Story of the Companions

Who Migrated to Abyssinia

(With the King of Abyssinia – The Negus)

by

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1- Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, the best of Allah's creation, Muhammad ibn Abdullah, and upon his pure family, his noble Companions, and those who follow their path in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

This is a remarkable and faith-inspiring story, the story of the migration of the noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) during the early days of Islam, when persecution by the Quraysh in Makkah became unbearable.

Indeed, within this story are countless lessons for every Muslim, lessons of patience, faith, truth, and trust in Allah.
All success comes only from Allah, the Most High.

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2- The Beginning of the Migration

This story is narrated on the authority of Umm Salamah bint Abi Umayyah ibn al-Mughira, the noble wife of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him).

She said:

“When we settled in the land of Abyssinia, we were granted protection there by the best of neighbors, the Negus. We lived in safety regarding our

religion and worshipped Allah, the Most High, without harm or insult."

When news of this reached the Quraysh, they decided to send two of their men with gifts to the Negus, in an attempt to convince him to return the Muslim emigrants. They prepared fine gifts, among them, beautiful leather, for the Negus and his bishops.

They sent ‘Amr ibn al-‘As and ‘Abdullah ibn Abi Rabi‘ah with these gifts, instructing them to present the gifts before speaking about the Muslims.

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3- The Delegation to the Negus

Umm Salamah continued:

“They arrived and presented their gifts to the bishops and to the Negus. Then they said, ‘O King, some foolish young men have left our people and have come to your land. They have abandoned the religion of their ancestors but have not entered your religion either. They follow a new religion that none of us know. Their people, the nobles of their tribes, have sent us to you to return them, for they know them best.’”

The bishops supported the Quraysh delegation, saying, “They have spoken the truth, O King; their people know them best.”

But the Negus became angry and said:

“By Allah, I will not hand them over to them! A people who have chosen my land for refuge and settled here will not

be returned until I call them and ask what their matter is. If they are as those men say, I will return them; if not, I will protect them and treat them well."

4- The Meeting with the Negus

He then summoned the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him). When they gathered, they said among themselves:

"What shall we say to the King?"
"We shall say what we know and what our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) taught us, no matter what happens."

When they entered, the Negus had already gathered his bishops around him, their scriptures open before them.

He asked:

“What is this religion that has separated you from your people, yet you have not entered my religion nor any other known faith?”

The one who spoke on behalf of the Muslims was Ja‘far ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him).

He said:

“O King, we were a people living in ignorance. We worshipped idols, ate dead animals, committed shameful acts,

severed family ties, and the strong among us oppressed the weak.

Then Allah sent to us a Messenger from among us — whose lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity we knew well.

He called us to worship Allah alone and to abandon what we and our forefathers worshipped besides Him — stones and idols.

He commanded us to speak the truth, fulfill trusts, maintain family ties, honor our neighbors, refrain from bloodshed, and avoid indecency, falsehood, and the devouring of orphans' wealth.

He commanded us to worship Allah alone, without partners, and to perform prayer, give zakah, and fast.

We believed in him and followed what he brought from Allah. But our people persecuted us, tortured us, and forced us to renounce our faith. So we fled to your land, O King, choosing you above others, hoping for your protection and justice."
The Negus asked:

"Do you have with you anything of what he brought from Allah?"

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